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Montana state employee's handbook

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Montana State Employee's Handbook



Architectural Drawing of Montana State Capitol Building, by J. H. Kent, 1899.
Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.

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**STAN STEPHENS, GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA**

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Since taking office in 1989, I've made a point to visit every state agency in Helena and many of our offices outside the Capital City. I have been very impressed with the quality of employees I've met in our agencies and their skills in serving the public. Thank you for your efforts and keep up the good work.

This handbook describes the wage and benefit package provided for state employees. It contains information about benefit options, employee responsibilities and privileges. It's a good resource which will give you a full understanding of what is offered to you as a state worker.

If you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to speak up. Your supervisor, agency personnel officer and the Department of Administration's State Personnel Division can help you.

I hope you have an excellent year and I look forward to working with you as we make Montana a better place to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stan Stephens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being clearly legible.

STAN STEPHENS
Governor



Laying the Cornerstone, Montana State Capitol, 1899. J. P. Ball, Photographer. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been designed to provide you with general information which will answer many of the questions frequently asked by employees. The personnel policies of the state of Montana are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana. These rules are available at the Montana State Library and in your agency. The rules also are found in the Montana Operations Manual, Volume III, Personnel Policies and Procedures, which is available in all state agencies.

NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK IS INTENDED TO BE PART OF A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN THE STATE OF MONTANA AND ITS EMPLOYEES. THE STATE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MODIFY, DELETE, OR ADD TO ANY OF THE STATEMENTS IN THIS HANDBOOK.



THE TREASURE STATE

Montana was purchased from France as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. In 1805-06 Lewis and Clark explored the area to assess the value of the new acquisition. Montana's first trading post was built in 1807 to accommodate the fur trappers in the area. St. Mary's Mission, the first permanent white settlement, was founded in 1841 and still stands today. The discovery of gold led to an influx of prospectors and other settlers dreaming of riches. Rich strikes were made at Bannack in 1862, with later strikes in Virginia City and Helena. Montana became a territory in 1864 and the 41st state in 1889. The state marked its 100th birthday in 1989 with various centennial activities.

The first citizens of Montana were the Plains Indians who inhabited the region until the white man began moving west. This westward expansion continually diminished Indian lands and hunting grounds, forcing the Indians to migrate. The discovery of gold, the slaughter of the buffalo, and the continued pressure from the white man forced the Indians to fight for their lives. The Indians' fight culminated with Custer's Last Stand on the Little Big Horn in 1876 and the surrender of Chief Joseph at the Battle of the Bear's Paw a year later.

The word "Montana" is derived from "montaña," the Spanish word for mountain. Montana, the nation's fourth largest state in area, averages 550 miles in length and 275 in width. The Continental Divide runs north and south through the western section. The highest elevation in the state is Granite Peak (12,799 feet); the lowest elevation is on the Kootenai River at the Idaho line (1,820 feet).

AN OVERVIEW OF STATE GOVERNMENT

MONTANA GOVERNMENT According to the Montana State Constitution, ratified by the people of Montana on June 6, 1972, the “power of the government of the state,” is divided into three distinct branches: Legislative, Executive and Judicial. The laws governing the state are enacted by the Legislative, implemented by the Executive and interpreted by the Judicial Branch of state government.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH The Legislature, which meets in regular session every two years for not more than ninety days, is composed of two bodies: the House of Representatives, with 100 members elected for two-year terms, and the Senate, with 50 members elected for four-year terms. One-half of the senators are elected every two years.

The Legislature is assisted by the Legislative Council, Legislative Auditor, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, Environmental Quality Council, the Consumer Council and various interim committees. The Legislature enacts the laws that govern the state. Laws so enacted must be approved by the governor. The Legislature may override the governor’s veto by a two-thirds vote of both houses.

JUDICIAL BRANCH The judicial power of the state is vested in the Supreme Court, District Courts, Justice Courts and such other courts as may be provided by law. The Supreme Court consists of one chief justice and six associate justices elected by popular vote for an eight-year term.

The judges of the twenty District Courts in Montana are elected for six-year terms. Each county elects at least one justice of the peace for a term of four years to carry out the judicial functions at the local level.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH The agencies of the Executive Branch are headed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Auditor and the Public Service Commission. Each officer is elected to office for a term of four years. The five members of the Public Service Commission are elected by districts for staggered terms of four years each.

GOVERNOR The executive power is vested in the governor who sees that all state laws are faithfully executed. A summary of the purposes of each of these departments is included in the section titled “Organization of the Executive Branch.” Offices directly attached to the Governor’s Office include Citizen’s Advocate and Budget and Program Planning.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR The Lieutenant Governor performs the duties provided by law and those delegated to him by the governor, and acts as governor when the governor is not in the state. If the office of the governor becomes vacant by reason of death, resignation or disqualification, the lieutenant governor becomes governor.

SECRETARY OF STATE The major duty of the Secretary of State is to establish and preserve records of the state of Montana. These records include the record of official executive acts, corporate records, uniform commercial code filings, certain bonds and mortgages. Other duties include the compilation and updating of the Montana Administrative Register and Administrative Rules of Montana and direction of county elections.

ATTORNEY GENERAL The Attorney General, the legal officer of the state, supervises the Department of Justice. The purpose of the Department of Justice is to protect the citizens of the state through enforcement of civil and criminal laws and through programs designed to provide public safety. It provides legal services for the representation of state agencies, as well as appellate legal services and legal assistance to the county prosecutors throughout the state. It conducts criminal identifications and investigations, operates the law enforcement telecommunications system, administers gambling control operations, supervises the Law Enforcement Academy, adopts and enforces fire safety codes, registers motor vehicles, issues driver's licenses, enforces motor vehicle laws, and provides technical and financial assistance to law enforcement agencies.



State Auditor's Office, 1903. Samuel Calderhead, Clerk; James H. Calderhead, Auditor; C. J. Holmes, Dept. Auditor; Miss Hogan, Steno. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

STATE AUDITOR The State Auditor's responsibility is to supervise the fiscal operations of the state and recommend fiscal management practices. The auditor is responsible for issuing and accounting for warrants, and providing central payroll services for all state agencies. The auditor acts as commissioner of insurance and the securities commissioner. The auditor collects insurance tax premiums, and licenses insurance agents, securities salesmen, broker-dealers and investment advisers.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION The major responsibility of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is to provide general supervision of the public elementary and secondary schools. The superintendent also disburses state and federal education funds; accredits public schools; certifies teachers; supervises pupil transportation, school foods and adult education programs; and administers federal and special education programs. The superintendent provides technical assistance to teachers and school personnel in such areas as the basic skills, vocational skills, school finance, inservice education, planning, development and evaluation. In addition, the superintendent is a member of the State Board of Land Commissioners, State Library Commission, Teacher's Retirement Board, Board of Public Education and the Board of Regents.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION The Public Service Commission is composed of five members elected from five districts in the state. The commissioners serve four-year terms and elect a chairman from among themselves every two years. The purpose of the Department of Public Service Regulation is to regulate the public utility, motor carrier, and railroad industries. It is responsible for providing safe, reliable, and adequate services at the lowest achievable cost to the consumers while concurrently providing the regulated industries with a fair and reasonable return on their investment for the services rendered.

ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH The Executive Reorganization Act states that all executive and administrative offices, boards, bureaus, commissions, agencies and instrumentalities shall be allocated among not more than 20 principal departments. Exceptions are the Office of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Auditor.

The lines of authority in executive branch departments start with a department director, who is appointed by and is responsible to the governor and who is responsible for the overall operation of a department. The director may be assisted in this capacity by a deputy director.

A department is comprised of divisions, each headed by an administrator. The division, in turn, is divided into bureaus, which are headed by bureau chiefs. The bureau may be divided into sections, which are headed by supervisors.

THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION The Board of Regents of Higher Education is the governing body of the Montana University System. The seven-member board is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. The university system includes six four year colleges and universities. The Board of Regents administers the state's five vocational technical centers and has some authority over the three state community colleges. Functions of the board include developing policies and rules for government of the university system and the vocational technical centers, granting diplomas and conferring honorary degrees, controlling receipt and disbursement of income and property to the university system, appointing administrators and faculty and supervising the agricultural experiment station.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION The purpose of the Department of Administration is to centralize and consolidate the general administrative, manage-

ment and fiscal functions of state government. The major functions of the department are personnel, accounting, procurement and printing, data processing, telecommunications, information systems, architecture and engineering, risk management and tort defense, administration of state-sponsored retirement programs and the state compensation mutual insurance fund, state tax appeals, and building security, custodial and maintenance services.



Dairy Laboratory, Montana Experiment Station Bozeman, MT. (Date unknown). *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE The purpose of the Department of Agriculture is the promotion of the agricultural industry and the enforcement of agricultural laws which protect farmers and consumers. The principal functions of the department are enforcement of grain laws, maintenance of comprehensive agricultural statistics, regulation of commercial feeds and fertilizers, monitoring of medicated feeds, agricultural marketing, grain inspection and grading, provision of horticultural inspection and quarantine services, wheat and barley research and market development, pesticide regulation and enforcement, operation of technical and field-oriented pesticide service programs, enforcement of apiary laws, operation of specialized rural development programs which provide assistance to qualified rural families, administration of state crop hail insurance, management of noxious weed control and provision of peer counseling, financial consulting, and mediation assistance to farmers.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE The Department of Commerce was created in 1981 to foster the development of the state's economy through technical assistance, monetary assistance and state planning for economic development. The department also includes programs that provide local government assistance, public safety, and business regulatory functions. The relationship between economic development and business regulatory functions ensures that the depart-

ment can strike an effective balance between the state's need for economic development and the desire to protect the public's health and safety.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND HUMAN SERVICES The Department of Corrections and Human Services provides a variety of services including adult corrections, mental health, and chemical dependency programs. The department's duties include program management, evaluation, statewide coordination and provision of services. The department is responsible for approval and certification of some programs; providing training and education for service providers and collecting reimbursements owed to the state for the cost of institutionalized care. The department manages Montana State Prison, Women's Correctional Center, Swan River Forest Camp, Montana State Hospital, Center for the Aged, Montana Developmental Center, Eastmont Human Services Center, and Montana Veteran's Home. It also manages a wide variety of community-based corrections and human service programs in Montana.



The Old Administration Building, Montana Developmental Center, Boulder. August, 1980. *Courtesy of the Montana Historic Preservation Office.*

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES The Department of Family Services (DFS) provides protective services to children and adults who are abused, neglected or exploited. The department helps troubled families through services that aim to stop child abuse, preserve family life, and educate the public about child abuse and neglect. Each year, DFS investigates more than 6,000 reports of child abuse. The department operates Pine Hills School for Boys and Mountain View School for Girls which provide residential and correctional services for youth ages 10 to 19. In addition, DFS is responsible for the aftercare program which provides community supervision for youths released from correctional facilities; arranging adoptions, typically for older children, sibling groups and children who have special needs, and providing supportive services that enable senior citizens to maintain their independence. DFS provides services across the state, operating on a five-region basis.



Fish & Game Office, 1910, Left to Right: Hazel Cole, Henry Avare, Alta McMahon.
Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS The purpose of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks is to conserve and manage wildlife and to administer parks and recreational areas for the benefit of Montanans and visitors to the state. The department strives to create optimum outdoor recreational opportunities, with emphasis placed on wildlife and on natural and cultural resources which have aesthetic, scenic, historical or archaeological significance. Functions of the department include issuing fishing, hunting, trapping and related licenses; enforcing laws and regulations relating to fish, wildlife and parks; acquiring, developing and maintaining wildlife management areas, state parks and recreational areas; and managing and enhancing wildlife populations.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES The Department of Health and Environmental Sciences protects and promotes the health of the people of Montana. The department develops and implements public health and environmental protection programs, enforces laws and regulations in these areas, assesses the public health and environmental needs in Montana and evaluates existing programs. The department is organized in three divisions: Centralized Services Division, Environmental Sciences Division, and Health Services Division.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY The purposes of the Department of Labor and Industry are to provide employment and training, to protect conditions for workers, and to protect employer/employee rights. Its functions include providing service to people actively seeking employment and to employers seeking workers; supervising and enforcing labor laws and worker health and safety standards; working to eliminate discriminatory practices; and administering state collective bargaining, workers' compensation regulation and unemployment insurance laws.

DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK The purpose of the Department of Livestock is to exercise general supervision over the livestock industry and to protect livestock from theft and disease. Its functions are enforcement of livestock laws, including the registration of marks and brands; regulation of livestock markets; rabies control; predatory animal control; meat inspection, and dairy, egg and milk inspection, control and regulation.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS The purposes of the Department of Military Affairs are to provide a trained and equipped military organization via the national guard for the governor in the event of a state emergency; to plan for, respond to, and recover from any disaster, manmade or natural, that might occur in the state of Montana; and to provide assistance to all veterans, their dependents and beneficiaries who may be entitled to veterans' benefits. The functions of the Department of Military Affairs are the operation of the Montana National Guard, the Disaster and Emergency Services Division, and the Veterans Affairs Division.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION The purpose of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is to guide the wise management, development, conservation, and use of certain natural resources in a manner consistent with Montana's environmental quality. DNRC works to sustain and improve the benefits derived from our water, soil, and rangeland; to encourage conservation and the use of renewable energy sources; to reduce losses from flooding; and to minimize environmental impacts from the development of energy sources, energy facilities, and water projects.

STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION The Board of Public Education is charged by the state constitution with the general supervision of the public school system. Functions include establishing policies for the accreditation of schools and teacher training programs, the certification of teachers, and the revocation or suspension of teaching certificates. Also, the board is the governing agency for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind and the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE The Department of Revenue administers approximately 31 state taxes and fees including individual income tax, oil and coal severance tax, corporation tax, payroll tax, property tax and numerous miscellaneous taxes. The department also operates the state liquor store system and conducts investigations on alcohol, tobacco and welfare fraud activities within the state.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS The purpose of the Department of State Lands is the management of lands and forests granted to the state by the United States Government to achieve maximum sustained return to the school trust fund; to administer the various mined-land reclamation laws which apply to state, private and federal lands; and to provide fire protection service on state and privately-owned lands within Montana.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services provides supportive and rehabilitative services to persons who are unable to provide such services for themselves.

Functions include providing economic assistance, medicaid assistance, vocational and rehabilitation services, services to the blind and child support enforcement. The department's overall goal is to empower Montanans as they work together with state and local community service organizations.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION On July 1, 1991, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) was created by consolidating the Department of Highways and transportation services provided by the Department of Commerce and Department of Revenue. MDT employs nearly 2,000 people. The state's newest department includes the Highway Division, Aeronautics Division, Rail and Transit Division, Motor Transport Services Division and the Administration Division. MDT is charged with a variety of responsibilities, including constructing, maintaining and protecting the state highway and bridge system; providing protection and promotion of safety in aeronautics and managing state-owned airports and navigational beacons; coordinating public transportation and rate analysis and litigation, and fiscal programming and cost accounting. The department is responsible for enforcing vehicle weight and dimension laws and the Outdoor Control Act, managing the state motor pool and roadside rest areas, as well as processing motor fuel tax collections and refunds.



Street Paving, Laurel, 1922. FAP. 57. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

SALARY AND BENEFITS

PAY PROGRAM The Legislature approves a pay program for state employees each session and appropriates money to fund the program.

Most classified employees are paid under a general pay schedule consisting of 25 grades. There are separate pay schedules for some employees, including teachers, blue collar workers, liquor store clerks and physicians.

In 1991, the Legislature approved a market-based pay plan. The intent and philosophy of the plan is to provide a state employee compensation system based on the prevailing compensation practices found in relevant public sector and private sector labor markets. The pay plan incorporates the results of a salary survey that is conducted by the Department of Administration, State Personnel Division.

Pay plan rules have been developed by the State Personnel Division explaining how each pay plan is administered. The rules are published in union contracts and the Montana Operations Manual, Volume III.

If you have questions about pay, contact your agency personnel officer or the State Personnel Division, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

SALARY PAYMENT SCHEDULE The state of Montana pays employees every two weeks. (The university system pays employees monthly.) If you are paid every two weeks, you will receive your check within 10 business days following the close of the payroll period. This delay permits the processing of an actual and not an estimated payroll. See your supervisor for your pay date.

A withholding stub comes with your paycheck, which indicates the number of hours worked, gross pay, net pay, and other items such as insurance, tax withholdings, deferred compensation, credit union or union deductions, voluntary charitable contributions and annual leave, sick leave and compensatory time earned and used. If you elect to have your check deposited automatically, you will receive a payroll advice form with the same information.

There are 26 pay periods in each year. Standard deductions, such as insurance or credit union payments, are halved each month and deducted from 24 pay periods. During the year there are two pay periods without standard deductions.

If you have questions about your paycheck, contact your payroll clerk.

STATE AND FEDERAL WITHHOLDING TAXES These deductions are withheld from your salary by law to help you meet tax obligations. Shortly after the end of the year, a W-2 form will be sent to you totaling all of the taxes withheld from your salary during the past year. The amount withheld will depend on your salary and on the number of dependents you claim when you are employed. Within certain limitations, you may change the number of dependents you claim at any time.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (PERS) Membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System is mandatory for most state employees and begins on the first day of employment. Contributions to PERS are tax deferred and may not be refunded for any reason prior to termination of covered employ-

ment. PERS provides retirement, disability and death benefits to over 27,000 state, school district and local government employees. In addition to PERS the retirement division also administers the Game Wardens', Judges', and Highway Patrol Retirement Systems.

The **Montana Public Employees' Retirement System Handbook**, which is available from your payroll or personnel officer, provides details about PERS. To obtain a copy or additional information, contact the Public Employees' Retirement Division at 1712 Ninth Avenue, Helena, Montana 59620, or call 444-3154.

SOCIAL SECURITY State employees are covered by Social Security and/or Medicare insurance. Currently, 7.65% of your salary is withheld and paid for full Social Security coverage. This includes 6.2% paid for Social Security coverage and 1.45% paid for Medicare coverage.

In general, you may receive Social Security benefits if you become permanently disabled or if you retire. Social Security also provides benefits to your survivors in the event of your death. For detailed information, contact your federal Social Security office.



Montana Crowds Gathered at Helena to Hear President Roosevelt. Published by Underwood and Underwood, 1903. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE GROUP BENEFITS The state of Montana has developed a comprehensive group benefits program for you. This program includes medical and dental benefits and life insurance options. The state pays a contribution for you which covers the cost of your basic medical, dental, and core life insurance. You may self-pay for other optional coverage and for coverage for eligible dependents.

This program is self-insured and is being updated and improved constantly. You should see a copy of the "Employee Benefit Plan" booklet for a complete description of benefits. A copy of the booklet is available from your agency personnel/payroll office or by contacting the Department of Administration, State Personnel Division, Employee Benefits Bureau, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

The present program was developed in consultation with the State Employee Group Benefits Advisory Council and through the cooperation of elected officials, labor organizations and state employees.

A health promotion program designed to reduce overall insurance costs by encouraging wellness and prevention is also available. The program offers information, classes and health screening to employees and dependents. You may obtain additional information from the employee Benefits Bureau of the State Personnel Division by calling 444-3871.

OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) covers the overtime and compensatory time practices of state government. Union contracts also may influence employee eligibility for overtime pay. In addition, some employees may be exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA. They may be eligible for benefits under the state's administrative rules. For more information about FLSA or to find out if your position is non-exempt (eligible for overtime wages) or exempt, contact your agency personnel officer.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION You can deduct part of your state income in order to defer tax payments or to supplement retirement income. The state's deferred compensation plan, authorized by the Internal Revenue Service Code and by Montana law, has been established by the Department of Administration for this purpose.

Compensation you defer in this plan, plus any resulting investment income, is not taxable to you (or your beneficiary) until the money is actually received by you, normally at retirement.

You can enroll in the plan, make changes in your participation or in your investment selections at any time with at least 30 days' notice.

For more information, contact the State Personnel Division, Department of Administration, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, telephone 444-3871.

INCENTIVE AWARDS State employees can get cash awards for ideas that improve state services or reduce state costs. Award amounts equal 10% of the net first year savings, up to a total of \$3,000 per idea. See your supervisor or personnel officer to obtain instructions and application forms, or contact the State Personnel Division, phone 444-3871.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION If you have an accident on the job, notify your supervisor immediately. You may be covered by Workers' Compensation insurance. After incurring six days of wage loss, you will receive a percentage of your salary as income while you are recuperating.

If you have an accident while on the job, you may use accrued sick leave. While you are using sick leave, the state will continue to pay its share of your

insurance premium. If you are receiving Workers' Compensation, you may be eligible to self-pay your group insurance for a period of time. You are not eligible to receive Workers' Compensation while using accrued sick leave.

The Department of Labor and Industry has published a pamphlet, "Montana Workers' Compensation Insurance," which provides additional details. For more information or to obtain a copy of that pamphlet, contact the Employment Relations Division, Dispute Resolution Bureau, P.O. Box 8011, Helena, MT 59624, or call 444-6530.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE You are covered by unemployment insurance. You can receive benefits, in most cases, if you become unemployed through no fault of your own.

If you should become unemployed and want to collect unemployment insurance, you must by law register with Job Service, both for benefits and with the job placement service. To receive benefits, you must be able, available and actively seeking work.

If you have questions about eligibility for unemployment benefits, contact your local Job Service office.

ON THE JOB

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT As a state employee, you are to carry out the duties of your job for the benefit of the people of the state of Montana and not for personal gain.

The Legislature has established Standards of Conduct for employees, which include a Code of Ethics, Proscribed Acts Related to Contracts and Claims, and prohibitions against nepotism. (Title 2, chapter 2, Montana Code Annotated.)

If you have questions about Standards of Conduct, contact your supervisor or agency personnel officer or the Department of Administration, State Personnel Division, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD An employee newly-hired in a permanent or seasonal position in state government must serve a probationary period to assess the employee's ability to perform the job duties, to assess the employee's conduct on the job, and to determine if the employee should be retained beyond the probationary period and attain permanent status. The employee who attains permanent status has additional rights under the grievance policy, the discipline handling policy, and the reduction-in-force policy. An employee who has attained permanent status in an agency and who transfers to another agency retains permanent status.

The probationary period will last from six months to one year, unless otherwise provided by law. Under certain circumstances, the probationary period may be extended an additional six months. Each agency will establish the probationary periods for the positions within that agency.

For more information about probation, contact your supervisor or agency personnel officer.

EMPLOYEE RECORD KEEPING Personnel records for state employees are maintained in both manual files and in the Payroll/Personnel/Position Control System, (P/P/P), which is a computer system.

P/P/P is a system for keeping employees' payroll and personnel records and comparing the money paid out by payroll with the payroll budgeting system called Position Control. While payroll and position control computer systems have been in operation for years, the current system has more built in checks to insure that both your pay and the budget system are more accurate. It also has the added feature of leave accounting.

Kinds of records included in the personnel portion are personal data, such as date of birth, sex, disabilities and military discharge information; home telephone and emergency contact; skills, training and education.

Persons who have access to your manual files and to P/P/P information include yourself, your supervisor and managers in the same chain of command. Dates of employment, title and salary are public information and can be requested by anyone. The P/P/P system has a system of passwords and a computer security system to ensure that each agency can look only at information about its own employees and not at any other agencies' employees. P/P/P is not tied in to any other computer system. Information about you cannot be given

without your consent or a court order to other agencies, the federal government, private organizations or other individuals.

You may have access to information in your manual or computer files at any time. Once a year a message will appear on your check stub informing you of your right to see your file. The P/P/P system will produce a copy of your computer file for your review annually. You should contact your personnel officer or your supervisor for access to your manual file.

For further information about employee record keeping, contact your agency personnel officer.



Artifacts in Montana Historical Society's Museum Collection. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION The state's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program was established through a governor's executive order. The Department of Administration works with each state agency to implement and maintain an effective EEO program throughout state government. The program objective is to eliminate discrimination in personnel, salaries and procedures, job structuring and classification, hiring, firing, promoting, and training. If you would like further information about the state of Montana's EEO program, contact the State Personnel Division, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

As part of the EEO program, each state agency has an ongoing Affirmative Action (AA) program and has appointed an EEO officer to develop the agency's program and work with managers on its implementation. This program's objectives are to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, or

political belief and to take affirmative action to equalize employment opportunities at all levels of agency operations for those groups of people who have historically been denied equal access — minority groups, women, and the disabled. As part of the AA program, agencies with more than ten employees have written Affirmative Action Plans with goals, timetables, action items to correct deficiencies identified by analyzing current workforce/labor force data.

If you would like further information about your agency's EEO/AA program, contact your EEO officer. If you believe you have been discriminated against based on a protected status listed above, you may file a complaint with your supervisor or agency EEO officer. You may also file a complaint with the Montana Human Rights Commission within 180 days of the alleged incident. If an employee initiates action to resolve the alleged discrimination in accordance with an agency or contract grievance procedure, the time allowed to file a complaint with the Montana Human Rights Commission is extended for the period of time it takes to complete the grievance procedure up to a maximum of 120 days. If the grievance procedure is not completed within 120 days of the alleged discrimination, the employee must file a complaint with the commission within 300 days of the date the alleged discrimination occurred. Contact your agency EEO officer or the Human Rights Division at 444-2884, for further information.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION PROGRAM The state of Montana has established a Sexual Harassment Prevention Program, as directed by the governor. The Department of Administration has adopted rules prohibiting sexual harassment and directing each agency to adopt a policy statement and reporting procedure. The department also presents seminars for state employees, which address prevention of sexual harassment and enforcement of laws and rules which prohibit this activity. If you would like more information about the state's Sexual Harassment Prevention Program, contact the State Personnel Division, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

Each state agency has established a policy statement prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace and a procedure for reporting complaints within the agency. If you would like more information about your agency's program, contact your agency EEO officer. If you believe you have been sexually harassed, you may file a complaint with your supervisor or agency EEO officer. An employee also may file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission within 180 days of the alleged incident. The time allowed for filing a sexual harassment discrimination complaint with the commission is extended if the employee initiates a grievance under an agency grievance procedure. For details, refer to the preceding section and contact your agency EEO officer or the Human Rights Commission, 444-2884.

ATTENDANCE Working hours will depend on your position and on the agency for which you work. Most state agencies operate from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, with an hour off for lunch. Some agencies allow alternate work schedules. See your supervisor for specific times and workdays.

If you will be late or unable to report for work, you should notify the appropriate person in your agency as soon as possible.

GRIEVANCES You may have the right to file a grievance.

Employees covered by a union contract which contains a grievance proce-

dures may file under that procedure. Other eligible employees may file a grievance under procedures set out in the grievances personnel policy.

Under procedures in the grievances policy, you should file an informal or oral grievance first and attempt to resolve the complaint at the lowest level possible. However, you may take any complaint which alleges unlawful discrimination immediately to the Human Rights Commission or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, in addition to filing it within the agency.

If management fails to respond or you are not satisfied with the response, you may file a formal or written complaint and follow the formal grievance process outlined in the policy. The head of the agency makes the final decision in the agency regarding the grievance.

You may be able to bring the grievance before an appropriate review body: The Board of Personnel Appeals, if you are an employee of the Departments of Transportation or Fish, Wildlife and Parks, or the Human Rights Commission, if unlawful discrimination is alleged.

See your agency personnel officer or your supervisor for details on grievance procedures.

CLASSIFICATION The Classification Bureau of the State Personnel Division administers a statewide classification plan for employees in the executive branch. Section 2-18-202, Montana Code Annotated, establishes guidelines for the classification plans.

To determine the class and grade of a position, the bureau considers the duties and responsibilities of the position rather than the characteristics of the individual. Positions are evaluated based upon the complexity and variety of the duties, knowledge, skills and abilities that are required, supervision received, supervision exercised, scope and effect of actions and decisions and personal contacts.

The Classification Bureau publishes an inventory of class titles and a volume of specifications describing the general characteristics of each class.

If you have questions about classification, you may contact your agency personnel officer or the Classification Bureau, State Personnel Division, Department of Administration, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana 59620, or call 444-3871.

JOB SHARING The 1983 Legislature approved legislation to encourage the practice of job sharing by state employees. Job sharing may be used, to the extent it is practical, as a means of promoting increased productivity and employment opportunities. Agencies are encouraged to fill vacancies through job sharing arrangements and current employees may request that their positions be considered for job sharing.

UNIONS AND EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS State employees, unless exempted by their job status, have the right to be represented by a collective bargaining organization. Salary, benefits, insurance and other matters which members feel are important may be negotiated, within the limits of the law regulating collective bargaining.

No one can discriminate against you for joining or refusing to join a collective bargaining organization.

Union dues may be deducted from your paycheck when you join one of the employee organizations, if you sign a written authorization for the deduction.

State employees who are exempted from collective bargaining are elected officials, persons directly appointed by the governor, supervisory employees, confidential employees, management officials, members of any board or commission who serve the state intermittently and professional engineers and engineers in training.



Building a Wing on Montana State Capitol — 1911. W. H. Lyon, Photographer. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

POLITICAL ACTIVITY If your position is funded wholly or in part by federal funds, you may be covered by the Hatch Act. If so, you may not use your official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office; directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or advise a state employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes; or be a candidate for public elective office in a partisan election.

You may express your opinions on political subjects and candidates; take an active part in political management and political campaigns; and be a candidate for an office within a political party.

Different rules apply to employees who are not subject to the Hatch Act. State restrictions on political activity by employees only cover time on the job. You may not solicit money or otherwise campaign while at your place of employment.

No one may coerce or require that you contribute money or services to a political candidate or committee.

There are no state law restrictions on political activity on your own time. As a public employee, you may run for office and the state law requires that you be granted 180 days of leave per year while you are serving in that office.

See your supervisor to determine which set of regulations applies to you.

TRAVEL EXPENSES If you must travel in connection with your job, the State pays certain expenses or will reimburse you, when you provide appropriate receipts.

A vehicle may be provided from the state motor pool, or you may receive approval for mileage if you use your own vehicle. State law prohibits personal use of motor pool vehicles.

When using public transportation, you should use the least expensive fare available.

Other out-of-pocket expenses, such as cab or bus fares, also may be covered with proper receipts. Tips and liquor are not covered.

For details on travel expenses, see the Montana Code Annotated, Title 2, chapter 18, part 5, and the Administrative Rules of Montana, Title 2, chapter 4.

REINSTATEMENT TO STATE SERVICE AFTER MILITARY DUTY If you are a permanent employee and you enlist in any branch of the armed services or are ordered to active duty by a reserve component, federal law requires that you be reinstated in a job at the same seniority, status and pay you would have received had you not been in the service. You must apply for reemployment within 90 days of your discharge.

RESIGNATION If you plan to resign from state service, you should notify your immediate supervisor of your plans at least two weeks prior to the date you plan to leave.

RETIREMENT There is no mandatory retirement age for most state employees.

When you do decide to retire, the Public Employees' Retirement Division and the Professional Development Center jointly sponsor quarterly workshops around the state to help you prepare for retirement.

A handbook called **It's Later Than You Think**, which discusses aspects of retirement from finances to family relations, is available from the division, 1712 Ninth Avenue, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3154.

LEAVE

ANNUAL VACATION LEAVE You earn annual vacation leave credits from your first day of employment, but you must be employed for six calendar months before you can use them.

If you are a full-time employee, you earn credits at a yearly rate calculated according to the following schedule, which applies to the total number of years you have been a state or local government employee in Montana, whether or not your employment was interrupted. Under certain conditions, military service time may count toward the rate earned. Contact your personnel officer or payroll clerk for details on how to verify other eligible public employment, so that it can be applied toward the rate earned.

RATE EARNED SCHEDULE	
Years of Employment	Working Days Credit Per Year
1 day through 10 years	15
10 years through 15 years	18
15 years through 20 years	21
20 years or more	24

If your employment status is something other than full-time, your leave credits will be calculated on a pro-rated basis. See your supervisor for details.

To apply to use annual vacation leave credits, you should complete a leave request form and submit it to your supervisor for approval in advance.

If you terminate your state employment, you are entitled to receive cash compensation for some or all unused vacation leave credits if you have worked at least six months.

SICK LEAVE You earn sick leave credits from your first day of employment, but you must be employed for 90 days before you are eligible to use them. Full-time employees earn one day of sick leave credit a month and benefits for other employees are prorated.

You can use sick leave for personal illness, injury, medical disability, maternity-related disability or immediately following your child's birth or placement for adoption, quarantine resulting from exposure to a contagious disease, medical, dental, or eye examination or treatment, care of or attendance to an immediate family member for any of these reasons, or to other relatives at the agency's discretion, and death and funeral attendance of immediate family members and others at agency discretion.

To apply in advance for sick leave, you should complete a standard leave request form and submit it to your supervisor. When you cannot request sick leave in advance, you should inform your supervisor of the reason for your absence as soon as possible and not wait until you return to work.

If you leave state employment, you are entitled to cash compensation for unused sick leave credits equal to one-fourth the compensation you would have received if you had used the credits, provided you have worked for ninety days.

If you are off work for some reason which is not approved for use of sick leave, but you claim sick leave, this is considered abuse of your sick leave and can be cause for dismissal and forfeiture of the lump sum payment. Chronic, persistent or patterned use of sick leave may also constitute abuse.

SICK LEAVE FUND You may join the Sick Leave Fund by contributing 8 hours of your sick leave to the fund. (Contributions and benefits are prorated for part-time employees.) If you experience an extensive illness or accident which causes you to exhaust all of your accrued leave, you may be eligible to receive benefits from the fund. You also may directly grant sick leave to another employee who has experienced an extensive illness or accident or receive direct grants from your co-workers, if you are ill or injured and exhaust your leave. To find out more about joining the Sick Leave Fund or about making or receiving direct grants, contact your supervisor, agency personnel officer, or the State Personnel Division, Department of Administration, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-3871.

HOLIDAY LEAVE A new holiday in honor of Martin Luther King was established by the 1991 Legislature. Martin Luther King Day, which replaces Heritage Day, is the third Monday in January.

Holidays for state employees are:

- 1) New Year's Day, January 1
- 2) Martin Luther King Day, the third Monday in January
- 3) Lincoln's and Washington's Birthday, the third Monday in February
- 4) Memorial Day, the last Monday in May
- 5) Independence Day, July 4
- 6) Labor Day, the first Monday in September
- 7) Columbus Day, the second Monday in October
- 8) Veteran's Day, November 11
- 9) Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Thursday in November
- 10) Christmas Day, December 25
- 11) State General Election Day, on even numbered years.

For more information about holidays, see your supervisor or agency personnel officer.

JURY DUTY AND WITNESS LEAVE State employees may serve as witnesses or on a jury when they are properly summoned or subpoenaed. If you are called, you should complete a leave request form, estimating how long you expect to be on leave and give it to your supervisor, along with a copy of the summons or subpoena.

You will continue to be paid your normal salary while on leave. You must collect all fees and allowances payable to you as a result of your service and turn them over to your payroll clerk within three days of the time you receive them. You may keep any expense or mileage money you receive, if you are using your personal vehicle.

You may choose to use accrued annual vacation leave while on jury duty or when serving as a witness. If you choose to do this, you may keep all fees and allowances you receive as a result of your service.

MATERNITY LEAVE Montana law requires that all employers provide a reasonable leave of absence for maternity leave and that you receive the same or a comparable job when you are ready to return to work. State government has adopted rules which provide that six weeks is a reasonable leave after the birth of a child. During that period, you will not be required to provide a medical certification of the temporary disability which results from childbirth. You may request to use sick leave, annual leave, leave without pay, and accrued compensatory time to cover your absence. You should comply with your agency's procedures on requesting leave. The agency may require that you give notice of your plans to take leave and the anticipated dates and duration.

If you need to begin your leave prior to the birth of your child or wish to continue on leave longer than six weeks, you should contact your supervisor or agency personnel officer for requirements on leave requests and obtaining medical certification.

State employees who are adoptive parents and birth fathers may use reasonable leave following the birth or placement of a child. You may request to take sick leave, annual leave, leave without pay, compensatory time or other appropriate paid leave.

For further information about maternity leave or leave for adoptive parents and birth fathers, contact your agency personnel officer or the State Personnel Division, Mitchell Building, Helena, Montana, 59620, phone 444-3871.

MILITARY LEAVE You must be granted up to 15 working days per year at any time for annual training with any reserve component of the armed forces.

You must be employed six calendar months to be eligible to receive paid military leave. When you are on authorized paid military leave, you will receive your regular salary.

To receive military leave, you should fill out a leave request form in advance. You also must submit a copy of your orders directing you to report for training with your leave request.

The 15 days of military leave cannot be charged to any vacation leave you have accrued.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY Rules have been developed for the administration of leave of absence without pay for state employees. In most cases, approval of leave without pay is up to the agency. There are no restrictions on your reasons for requesting a leave. The agency will consider your request based on the cost and benefits to the agency resulting from your absence.

For more information about requesting leave of absence without pay, contact your supervisor or your personnel officer.

UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE OF ABSENCE An unauthorized leave of absence occurs when you are absent from an assigned place of work or duty or fail to report for work as scheduled without immediately providing your supervisor with a reasonable excuse for your absence or getting leave approved in advance.

If you take an unauthorized leave, any action taken in regard to your absence is at the agency's discretion.

LEAVE DUE TO EMERGENCIES The governor may declare that an emergency is in effect from either natural or man-made disasters, which will result in a late opening or early closing of one or all state offices.

Absences due to emergencies declared by the governor will not be charged to your compensatory time, vacation leave or leave without pay. If you live in an area that has been declared a disaster area or the governor has declared an emergency and you cannot get to work, your agency will grant you paid time off.

If you volunteer to assist during a disaster or emergency which is not formally declared by the governor, you may request to take annual leave, compensatory time, or leave without pay to cover your absence. You should request leave in the same manner you would request leave for any purpose. Your agency may ask you to provide written verification of your participation as a volunteer.



Campers on Rock Creek, Missoula National Forest, 1930. Photograph by K. O. Swan.
Courtesy of the U. S. Forest Service.

EMPLOYEE SERVICES

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT Training and development opportunities may be available to you through your agency or the state of Montana.

State of Montana Training Programs. The state provides training and development opportunities through the Department of Administration's two training centers:

- The Professional Development Center (PDC) provides a variety of training courses regarding management, supervision, communications and other issues. The seminars and workshops are tailored to the needs of government employees. Most of the courses are one-day or half-day in length.

The PDC also conducts the Management Development Program. This program provides extensive training on three levels: Basics of Management, Essentials of Management and Principles of Upper Management. Each of these courses is conducted over several weeks with one or two classes a week.

The PDC announces its courses through quarterly schedules and a flyer describing each class, and in issues of "Montana Personnel Perspectives." For more information, contact your personnel officer or call the PDC at 444-3985.

- The Information Services Division (ISD) Training Program is designed to train employees in the use of the wide variety of data processing resources owned and operated by state agencies. Courses in both mainframe and microcomputing systems and software are offered in hands-on workshops. Schedules and descriptions are available in monthly issues of Information Services Division's "News and Views." For additional information about ISD's program, call 444-2973.

Agency Training Programs. Most agencies have internal training programs or training funds to help employees develop skills in areas specific to the agency's mission. For information about these programs, contact your agency's training officer or personnel officer.

CREDIT UNIONS Credit Unions specifically for state employees are available in all 56 counties in Montana. State Capitol Employees Credit Union of Helena provides service to state employees in 22 of these counties.

For more information about credit unions, you can contact the Montana Credit Unions League, 1236 Helena Avenue, Helena, Montana 59601, phone 442-9081, or the State Capitol Employees Credit Union of Helena, 449-2680.

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY The Montana State Library Information Resources Program provides library materials and reference services to state employees and to the general public.

The Library's other primary programs include the Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS), a centralized program that provides information about Montana's natural resources to decentralized databases; the Mon-



Birds of Montana, Museum Exhibit, Montana State Library, (Date unknown). *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

tana State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which loans materials in a variety of formats without charge to eligible institutions and individuals; the Institutional Library Program, which provides consulting services to 14 state-run institutional libraries in Montana; and, Library Development, which provides consulting services and continuing education to all types of libraries in the state.

The Montana State Library is located in the Justice and Montana State Library Building at Sixth and Sanders. For additional information about the services provided by the State Library, call 444-3004.

MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM The Montana Historical Society Museum's purpose is to collect and preserve art and artifacts relating to Montana and its history. The Historical Society Museum includes Montana Homeland, an exhibit that opened in 1988, the Mackay Gallery of C. M. Russell art, the Haynes Gallery about the life and work of photographer F. Jay Haynes, and the Northeast Gallery which features changing exhibits. The Historical Society is located at 225 N. Roberts, Helena, Montana 59620, phone 444-2694.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES The Montana Historical Society Library and Archives contain the largest collection available of published and manuscript materials related to Montana history. The library currently receives copies of every daily and weekly newspaper, and every magazine published in the state. It holds an estimated 95% of the newspapers ever published in Montana, a large map collection, and has been a depository for official state publications since the 19th century. The collection also includes over 2500 volumes dealing with the Plains cattle industry from 1860 to 1940, the periodicals from most other historical societies west of the Mississippi, a non-Montana genealogical collection, and selected Federal material including the Congressional Serial Set.



State Law Library—Oliver T. Crane, State Law Librarian, 1902-1904. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

The Archives has the minutes of legislative committees from 1959 on, the older case files from the Supreme Court, and other inactive records of Territorial and State government as well as manuscripts and records from private citizens and businesses, and over 150,000 photographs.

The Society's library is a research library, with many old, rare, and fragile items. Materials may not be checked out, but can be used in the Library reading room on the second floor of the Society's building, 225 N. Roberts St. Photocopy, microprint, and photograph reproduction services are available, phone 444-2694.

STATE LAW LIBRARY The State Law Library provides legal information and services to state employees and the general public. The Law Library contains or has access to over 100,000 volumes of statutes and codes, opinions, regulations, treatises, journals and law reviews. The Law Library is a federal depository library, providing users with materials from federal government, other states, Canada and England. Legal databases including LEXIS/NEXIS and WESTLAW and hundreds of audio and videotapes are available.

Professional law librarians provide reference assistance in the law library.

In addition to regular working hours, the library is open Monday and Wednesday evenings and on Saturdays.

The State Law Library is located in the Justice and Montana State Library Building at Sixth and Sanders. For details about these and other services, call 444-3636 (reference); 444-1977 (circulation); 444-3603 (fax); or 444-3660 (administration).

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION We hope that your work in state service will be a rewarding and challenging experience. As public employees, it is incumbent upon all of us to provide the most efficient, responsive and economical service possible.



Supreme Court of Montana, 1901-1902. Judge Pigott, Judge Brantley, Judge Milburn; Mr. Crane, Marshall; Henry G. Rickerts, Clerk. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*

THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

The state seal of Montana represents important elements of Montana's history and essential components of its future. Although the seal has evolved dramatically from Francis M. Thompson's original proposal (left) made at the First Legislative Assembly in 1865, today's seal (bottom row, right) still incorporates many of Montana's natural treasures—agriculture, mining, mountains, water and timber.



1865



Today's Seal



Montana State Capitol in 1989. *Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society.*